

**Minutes of the Management Board meeting
held on Thursday 5 February 2015 at 3.30pm**

Those present: Dame Janet Gaymer DBE (non-executive member) (Chair)
Myfanwy Barrett (Director of Finance)
John Borley CB (Director General of Facilities)
David Natzler (Acting Clerk of the House)
Andrew Walker (Director General of HR and Change)
Barbara Scott (non-executive member)

In attendance: Tom Goldsmith (Board Secretary)
Ben Williams (Assistant Secretary)
John Benger (Acting Head, Department of Information Services)
Jacqy Sharpe (Acting Director General of Chamber and Committee Services)
Matthew Taylor (Acting Head, PICT)
Adam Mellows-Facer (Security Governance Implementation Manager) (item 4 only)
Veronica Daly (Director, Parliamentary Procurement and Commercial Service) (item 5 only)
Bob Twigger (Commission Secretary) (item 6 only)

1. Actions arising

- 1.1 **David Natzler** reported on his meeting with the Trade Union Side (TUS) president. The meeting had been constructive but the TUS president wished to attend a Board meeting. The **Chair** stated that the purpose of such a meeting should be to listen to the TUS's concerns, not to engage in any form of negotiation. **Andrew Walker** updated the Board on the state of discussions with the unions on the new performance management and competency based pay systems.
- 1.2 **Jacqy Sharpe** updated the Board on the security clearance performance indicator. The parts of the process that the Pass Office was directly responsible for were discharged as effectively as possible, however there were a few options for addressing delays in the processes conducted by third parties. Assurances had been received about the ability to cope with demands caused by the General Election and there might be merit in adjusting the indicator to focus the part of the processes that were directly within the House's control.
- 1.3 The Board considered the security clearance KPI. In discussion the following points were made:
 - The Board had discussed options for seconding staff to third party organisations but there were questions about whether this was an effective use of resources.
 - Amending the performance indicator would not address the central issue of performance and the impact this had on Members and departments.
 - There may be value in the having the House's part of the process reviewed by the Continuous Improvement Team.

- The House Service should approach the external agency with potential solutions which could be discussed.

1.4 *The **Board** agreed that the Continuous Improvement Team should be invited to help review the Commons owned parts of the security clearance process and that **David Natzler** would undertake initial high level engagement with external bodies on possible solutions.*

2. Oral Updates

- 2.1 **Matthew Taylor** reported on a network outage that had affected the Estate on 30 January. This had been caused by damage to external cables; PICT was reviewing the diversity of cable routes to improve resilience. PICT was also mapping recommendations by the Digital Democracy Commission on to activity currently being undertaken, or planned, by PICT. **David Natzler** noted that Edward Wood was producing an implementation plan for the Digital Democracy Commission and that the report was likely to be debated before dissolution.
- 2.2 **Myfanwy Barrett** reported on issues raised by Members at the Finance and Services Committee including estates projects in the Palace. **John Borley** noted that certain works were essential to ensure compliance with fire and food safety requirements.
- 2.3 **John Bengier** reported that the newspaper archives in the Palace needed to be relocated to manage a fire risk. This would increase pressure on DIS teams relocating other research material as part of the co-location project with the Committee Office and additional resources might be required.
- 2.4 **Andrew Walker** reported that the Good Manager Guide was being launched. A communication had been sent to staff about the Individual Performance Review and discussions were ongoing with departments about the final structure of the form. The need to clarify the timeframes from the different strands of HR activities was noted. Board members were asked to promote Parliamentary Safety, Health and Wellbeing Day which was taking place on 12 February. The Commission was meeting to consider the job description and recruitment process for the Director-General at its meeting on 9 February.
- 2.5 **John Borley** reported that Facilities had been assessed under the British Quality Foundation's Recognised for Excellence scheme and had improved its rating.
- 2.6 **Jacqy Sharpe** report that the Committee Office had conducted an equality analysis of circulation policy and had asked for feedback from all staff, the Unions and the Workplace Equality Networks; the invitation to comment had been welcomed.
- 2.7 The **Chair** reported on the Joint Audit Committee meeting where safety management and the Security Arrangements Renewal Programme were discussed. The Commons Audit Committee had agreed the Audit Committee

plan for the next year and discussed cyber security and the use of settlement agreements.

- 2.8 **David Natzler** noted that a member of Committee Office staff had suffered an accident when in the Falkland Islands on a committee visit.

3. Finance

- 3.1 **Myfanwy Barrett** introduced the financial monitoring report up to the end of the third quarter. The position had improved slightly but issues were still emerging. A change in the intended usage in Canon Row would result in some expenditure moving from capital to resource. *The Board agreed to release an additional £0.6m to Facilities as set out in the paper.*

4. Security Governance

- 4.1 **Adam Mellows-Facer** introduced his paper. He had been asked by both Clerks to come up with an implementation plan for the main recommendations of the Jenkins report.

5. Shared Services

- 5.1 The **Chair** noted for the minutes that she mentored Veronica Daly.
- 5.2 **Veronica Daly** introduced her paper and thanked the Board for the opportunity to capture the experience of running a shared service to inform any future exercises of this kind. The paper had been shared with senior staff in the House of Lords Administration.
- 5.3 The Board considered the paper. In discussion the following points were made:
- The paper brought together a number of important lessons that should be borne in mind in any future efforts to create a shared service.
 - In some ways, there was a benefit to committing, at a senior level, to the creation of a shared service and then resolving the challenges that this proposal faced, rather than attempting to address every possible problem before deciding whether or not to create a shared service. However, it was desirable to resolve issues before implementation where possible.
 - The project to create the Parliamentary Procurement and Commercial Service (PPCS) had benefited greatly from the personal commitment of those involved, especially its Director.
 - Support for the proposal from the very top of both organisations had been extremely important to the success of PPCS.
 - The Commons and Lords Boards had previously discussed removing differences in their terms and conditions at an informal meeting. There might be merit in returning to this proposal, however it would not be possible to make quick progress on this issue.
 - The existence of lots of separate teams in other functional areas of the two Houses had a significant impact on unified teams.

- There were some differences between the two Houses arising from their different constitutional positions where greater alignment would be difficult or undesirable.
- A lot of effort had been spent during the creation and establishment of PPCS to address cultural differences between the two Houses.
- When establishing a unified service consideration should be given to the joint department model as well as a shared service hosted by one of the two Houses. Managers needed to be candid about the advantages and disadvantages.
- It would be important to ensure that the lessons captured in this paper were applied to future exercises.

6. House of Commons Governance Select Committee: Implementation

6.1 **Bob Twigger** updated the Board on the implementation of the Governance Select Committee's recommendations. The recruitment for the Clerk of the House had been launched, the Bill to make changes to the Commission had been published and the Commission was due to make a decision on the Director-General recruitment at its meeting on 9 February. As most of phase 1 was now either complete or action was in hand, thought was now being given to phase 2. Phase 2 was concerned with the new structure that would be in place after the Election ahead of the appointment of the Director-General. There was still some uncertainty about when the backbench members of the Commission would be appointed. Thought should be given to how the new structure might drive behavioural change in the new bodies and groups. It would be important to ensure that there were frequent communications to staff, which explained why some of the report's recommendations could not be implemented yet.

6.2 The Board considered the implementation of the Governance Select Committee's recommendations. During discussion the following points were made:

- The membership of the Executive Committee was a matter for the Commission and no decision about the membership had been taken.
- It was important to continue to communicate with staff and to be open about the information that was not yet available. A webpage with relevant material would be uploaded to the intranet shortly.
- An action plan needed to be developed to take forward the behavioural and cultural issues that had been discussed at the senior leadership groups. A group reporting to the People Strategy Board would be asked to lead on this work with input from the OCE.
- Thought would need to be given to how the Executive Committee would interact with other Boards and groups such as PICTAB and PEB.

7. AOB

7.1 **Myfanwy Barrett** asked if the times of the Clerk's thank you events could be varied so staff with caring commitments or who worked flexible hours could attend.